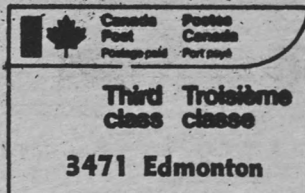
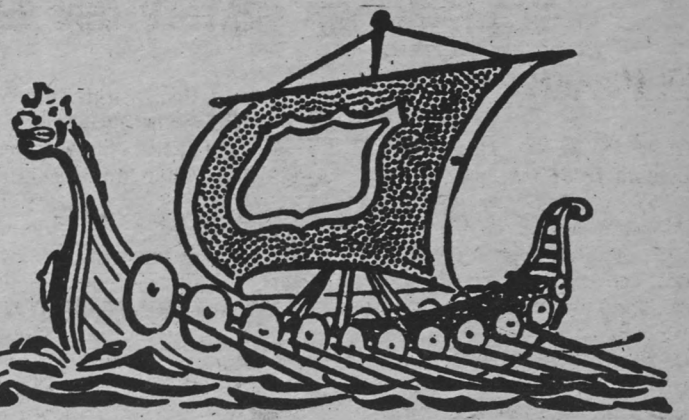


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The Scandinavian Centre News



PUBLISHED BY THE SCANDINAVIAN CENTRE COOPERATIVE ASSOCIATION

Vol. XIII No. 12

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December 1973

Merry Christmas

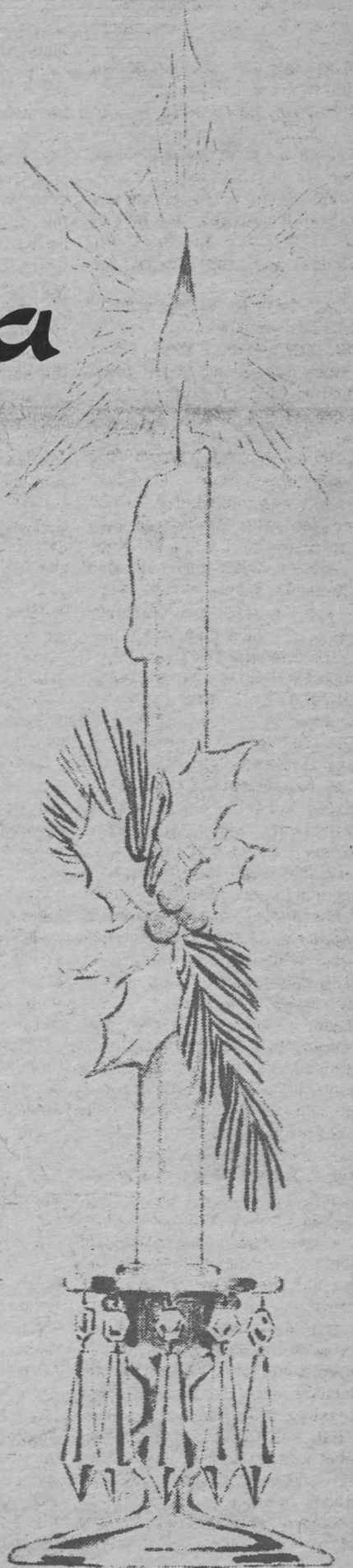
Glædelig Jul

Hauskaa Joulua

Gledeleg Jul

Gledileg Jul

God Jul



SPLINTERS from the BOARD

By Anne Sahuri

SCANDAPADES '74 tickets are selling fast. Have you got yours already? If not, call 422-2748 or write to Scandapades Box Office, Centennial Building, Edmonton, Alta. Scandapades '74 is coming up fast—Sat., Feb. 9 isn't really far away. Thanks to the ladies of all five Scandinavian groups for recent coffee parties which have been successful in many ways.

RADIO PROGRAM

Don't forget to phone Les Greenham at 455-0082 regarding the radio announcements on Saturdays.

CHRISTMAS

Christmas traditions vary from one country to the other but the celebration of the birth of our Savior is the same all over, and throughout the world the Christmas message is read on Dec. 25 as it has been for centuries. The gifts are being presented and received and the Christmas spirit brings good will and happiness throughout the world. Let us try to keep the same spirit through the new year by showing compassion, friendliness and co-operation toward our fellow citizens. The Board wishes to extend the best of Holiday Wishes to all the readers. May the 1973 Christmas bring peace of mind and happiness to all of you. □

The Shepherds

Lela F. Morris.

The shepherds of the hills were greatly blessed;
They saw the glowing splendor of the star.

While all the little village lay at rest,
It shone on Bethlehem and hills afar.
They heard angel voices from the heavens ring,
And followed on to where the young child lay.

There were glad tidings of the newborn king,
In a lowly manger on the fragrant hay;
And, guided by a new star's radiant light,
The Wise Men knelt with precious gifts of gold.

Where glory brushed the shadows of the night,
They saw the beauty of that sacred scene unfold.

God showers his grace on humble folk and blesses
them,
Even shepherds on the hills of Bethlehem.

The Scandinavian Centre News

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216, 11802-124 St.
Edmonton, Alta. T5L 0M3. □

DIRECTOR

Mr. Ole Knudsen
4908 - 115 Street 434-6883

MANAGING EDITOR

Mr. Leslie L. Morris
No. 216, 11802 - 124 St. 452-9474

CORRESPONDENTS

Danish Society "DANIA"
Mrs. Lili Nielsen
3903 - 111A Street 435-5655

Icelandic Society of Edmonton:
Mr. Les Greenham
10424 - 142 Street 455-0082

Leif Eiriksson Icelandic Club:
Mr. Bjorgvin Sigurdson
6303 Lynch Cresc. S.W., Calgary

Finnish Society of Edmonton:
Mr. Elmer Kankunen
3304-106 Avenue 477-6751

Sons of Norway
"NORTHERN LIGHTS":
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Box 36, Sexsmith, Alberta

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Vasa Lodge "BUFORD":
Mrs. Dolores Johnson
R.R.1 Warburg, Alta., T0C 2T0

Vasa Lodge "NORDSTJARNAN":
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Mrs. Millie Weiss
11432 - 85 Street 477-7553

SPORTS

Mr. Ole Jensen
5927 - 138 Avenue 475-2211

Mr. Tage Aaqist

FOREIGN

Mr. Ove Kampe
Knostvagen 43
S-141 71 Huddinge, Sweden

SIG SORENSON RECEIVES HONOR AWARD

TORSKE KLUBBEN SUBMITS NAME

Torske Klubben, an Edmonton Norwegian businessmen's organization, has entered the race to honor one of its distinguished members by submitting the name of Sigurd A. Sorenson to receive The Scandinavian Centre News Honor Award.

A letter was received from by David Birley of Signature Studios. Here is a short biography of Sigurd Sorenson. ***

"Torske Klubben would nominate Sigurd Sorenson as the Norwegian deserving of recognition for his special efforts in developing the close tie amongst the Scandinavian groups as demonstrated by the organization for construction of the Scandinavian Centre.

"He has also been a leading force in the projection of Norwegian culture into the Alberta scene.

"It is the persistent efforts of such persons as Sig Sorenson that assist others to search for and maintain interest in their cultural background."

Sig Sorenson has himself been Boss of Torske Klubben and is still active in the organization. He was also the instigator and founding President of The Scandinavian Centre as well as being on the board of directors for many years. He is now Honourary President of the Centre. He has helped produce The Scandinavian Centre News in the past, and is now leading the production of Scandapades '74, an annual stage show incorporating the five Scandinavian ethnic groups.

Mr. Sorenson will receive The Scandinavian Centre News Honor Award diploma, as well as an 8 x 10" colored portrait presented

Sigurd A. Sorenson - Insurance Counsellor

In a beautiful rural setting near Kristiansand, Norway, the parents of Sigurd Arthur Sorenson were born. Ben Sorenson, his father, was born Feb. 23, 1876, at the picturesque hillside farm of Iglebekk; and his mother, Bertha Kristensen, born March 29, 1889, on the comparatively flat Stallemo farm.

His father emigrated to North Dakota in the 1890's and his mother followed in 1911, and were married at Marengo, Sask. On Nov. 26, 1912, Sig Sorenson was born on the Saskatchewan Prairies, two miles from the Alberta boundary, near the Village of Compeer, Alta.

He received his public school education at Hilldale School, Court, Sask., and "Stallemo Skule" near Kristiansand, Norway; his high school education at Compeer, Alta., and his teacher training at Camrose Normal School. He graduated with "Honors" in practice teaching and taught for 15 years in Alberta Schools—Home Valley, near Cadogan; Violetdale, near Czar; Lake Demay, near Camrose; Hughenden Intermediate



Sigurd A. Sorenson (Portrait by David Birley, Signature Studios)

School; and Chauvin High School as principal.

During his 15 years of teaching, he continued his studies by taking correspondence courses and summer school sessions at the University of Alberta. While taking a course from Queens University at Kingston, Ont., he won the MACLACHLAN PEACE PRIZE for his Essay on "How to Promote Enduring World Peace". On May 15, 1945, he graduated from the University of Alberta with a "Bachelor of Education" degree.

On July 1, 1947, Mr. Sorenson entered the business world, and later formed the firm "Sorenson Assurance Service Ltd." The

(Continued on Page 3)

Thank You For Your DONATION

M. SORENSON, White Rock, B.C.—\$5.00
Mrs. Luke MAJEAU, St. Albert—\$3.00
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\$5.00
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DANISH SOCIETY, "DANIA", Edmonton—\$50.00

LIST OF NAMES OF PRESIDENTS OF RESPECTIVE SCANDINAVIAN SOCIETIES IN EDMONTON

DANISH — Allan Sorensen, 12923-133 St., 452-3387
FINNISH — Anne Sahuri, 16112 - 104 Ave., 489-7515, 435-3758
ICELANDIC — Barney Thorlakson, 15506 - 77 Ave., 487-1506, 452-8550
NORWEGIAN — Gladys Clark, 13552 - 123A Ave., 455-5371
SWEDISH — Joan Petersson, 7412 - 87 Ave., 469-0259
SCANDINAVIAN CENTRE — Søren Sørensen, 26 Burnham Ave., St. Albert, 459-7205

SOLGLYT SPOTLIGHT



By Evelyn Jensen

COMING EVENTS

Saturday, December 8th

Election of Officers and Christmas Bingo in the Nordic Room, Scandinavian Centre.

Sunday, December 16th

Christmas Party, Nordic Room—Scandinavian Centre.

A successful Wine, Cheese and Whist Party was held Oct. 27. Prize winners were:

HIGH MEN'S—Peter Hansen

HIGH LADIES'—Anne Vold

LOW MEN'S—Thorleif Berg

LOW LADIES'—Janette Burt

Torske Klubben held their monthly Luncheon meeting Nov. 6. A short talk was given by Dennis Lindberg on his recent trip to Russia. We understand that next month is Ladies Night at Torske Klubben at which time Dennis will give a more detailed account of his travels and also show slides.

Mrs. Molly Cooper attended the Alberta Hospitals Auxilliary Provincial Convention in Calgary recently.

We extend our deepest sympathy to Ellesworth Halberg and family on the passing of his father, Schang Halberg.

Deepest sympathy also to Mrs. Hazel Lubbers on the passing of her husband.

Norwegian Language classes are underway at Parkview School, 143 St. and 92 Ave. each Wednesday evening at 6 p.m. Anyone wishing further information please phone Mrs. Janette Burt at 447-3727.

The ice rink which the Anderson brothers are building is going to have really up to date equipment. Anders and Inge have imported the first two electrical re-

surfacing units in Alberta.

Good wishes to Johanna Nilsen who is recuperating at home after being in hospital.

We wish a speedy recovery to Joe Lineham who is in the Royal Alex Hospital and also to Mrs. Ruth Hammerstad, who broke her arm recently.

Mrs. Lydia Tagseth of Govan, Sask., has been visiting with her daughter, Mrs. Astrid Hope. While here she enjoyed one of her Sunday Coffee Parties at the Scandinavian Centre.

Any member who would be interested in joining an adult choir are asked to call Sis. Janette Burt at 447-3727, Bro. Del Melsness at 487-3626 or Sister Gladys Clark at 455-5371.

The tentative time set for folk dancing will be on Thursday evenings. Please call Bro. Warren Clark (455-5371) for further information.

The annual Lutefisk Supper was held Nov. 17 in the Masonic Temple. Over 300 people enjoyed the delicious meal, after which they were entertained by Sons of Norway Queen Darlene Melsness and Magnar Bjorsvik, who sang several songs, accompanied at the piano by Del Melsness. Two delightful films on Norway were shown and the evening ended with dancing to the music of Wally Heppner. A very special vote of thanks to Mrs. Sivertsen and all the ladies and gentlemen who spent so much time and effort to make this event the success that it was.

Your correspondent for next month will be Evelyn Jensen. Please phone your news in to her at 466-2712. □

of Norway in 1958.

On October 4, 1953, he became the founding president of the Scandinavian Centre Co-operative Association Ltd. His untiring efforts and his visions caused the Scandinavian Centre at 14220-125th Ave., Edmonton, to become a reality, when it was officially opened on June 20, 1964. He states that the three underlying purposes of The Scandinavian Centre are:

(1) To serve as a Community Centre with a Scandinavian flavor.

(1) To serve as a fitting memorial to our Scandinavian pioneers to whom we owe so much.

(3) And most important, to assist Scandinavians to make a greater contribution to Canadian culture, of that which is good in the backgrounds of the five Nordic countries—Denmark, Iceland, Finland, Norway and Sweden.

"Sig", as he is popularly called, is happily married to the former, Selma Belinda Johnson, of Chauvin, Alta., and feels that he owes much of his success to her great loyalty and support. He has three children: Mrs. Elizabeth Kay (Betty) Knight, of Ont.; Robert Sigurd Sorenson and Sharon Ardyth Sorenson of Edmonton, and 5 grandchildren. □

After checking 3000 cases of fraud in the files of the Better Business Bureau, a researcher concluded that every sucker is a potential swindler, a finding confirmed by police detectives.

Scandapades '74 Show Shaped Up

Auditions for Scandapades '74 came to a grand finale on Nov. 25. All talent was on hand and, under the careful screening of its director, Jack McCreath, the show, as it will appear on Feb. 9, 1974, is taking shape.

Rehearsals will take place at the Scandinavian Centre, Jan. 6, Jan. 13, Jan. 20, Jan. 27, and Feb. 4 from 2:00-5:00 p.m. The final rehearsal is expected to take place at the Jubilee Auditorium on Fri., Feb. 8, 1974. Then the curtain will open on "STARS OF SCANDINAVIA" at 8:00 p.m. on Feb. 9.

Everyone is to get their reserve tickets now at "The Scandapades Box Office, the Centennial Bldg, 103 Ave, 100 St. Edmonton. Why not buy a ticket for a friend for a Christmas gift? There are four major attractions:

1. Scandapades '74 — 8:00 - 10:00 — Main Auditorium.
2. Cultural Display from the

five Scandinavian Countries in the main lobby all evening.

3. Scandinavian Food Fare — 10:00-12:00 midnight on the lower floor.

4. Scandinavian Dancing — 10:00 - 12:00 midnight in the assembly room.

The Cultural Directors of the five Scandinavian groups form the steering committee. They are:

DANISH—Pete Nielsen, 257 Southridge, 106 St. & 45 Ave., ph. 436-4109.

FINNISH—Arvi Liimatainen, 11259 -79 Ave., ph. 435-7447.

ICELANDIC—Mrs. Freda Smith, 15214-81 Ave., ph. 489-0902.

NORWEGIAN—Mrs. Astrid Hope, 6307-103A Ave., ph. 469-4747.

SWEDISH—Mrs. Verna Larson, 7820-148 St., ph. 488-4607 & 454-2481.

SCANDINAVIAN CENTRE — Mrs. Margaret Cameron, 10740 - 133 St., ph. 455-2064.



Edgar Bergen's famed wooden sidekick, Charlie McCarthy—the most unusual and valuable block of wood in the world, will star at Scandapades '74 on Feb. 9, 1974. The comedy routine with Charlie

will also include Bergen's other marvellous wooden characters, Mortimer Snerd and Effie Klinker.

CHRISTMAS

Christmas time is colorful lights twinkling, mistletoe and tinsel.

Christmas time is sharing time; it is gift giving and gift receiving time.

It is a festive time with roast turkey and plum pudding.

Christmas time is a time when the story of Jesus' birth is told and retold.

Christmas is a fitting time to renew our desires to make real the message heralded by the angels when Jesus was born, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

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A Joyous Christmas
To All Our
Clients And Friends

Sig Sorenson

May The
Blessings Of
The Yuletide
Be With You
Throughout
The
Coming Year



Knut Svidal

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Centennial Building, Edmonton 15, Alberta

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ICELANDIC NEWSLETTER

By Les Greenham

Due to circumstances beyond our control this will be the last edition in the Scandinavian Centre News by Yours Truly. However, all being well the Lord willing, we shall be with you as usual next year.

Since this is the month of December and Santa Claus will be visiting you once again, I ask you the question: "Have you been good?" We shall be sending our report to Santa very shortly and let me tell you, the Shadow knows what everybody has been doing. Wonder how many of us think back to when we hung up our stockings and what happy days they were. But poor **Ninna Campbell** will be out of luck this year since according to her own admission she doesn't wear stockings any more. She now wears leotards. Too bad, **Ninna**. While we are talking about Christmas, **Thorey** and myself in all sincerity do wish nothing but joy, health and contentment to you all.

Let's see what spicy stories we can dig up about the Icelanders and their friends. Hmm, I'll be darned. They just don't seem to misbehave anymore. Not like the good old days back in Manitoba.

It sure was nice to see **Alec** and **Pauline Mitchell** back again after their six week trip overseas. **Pauline**, being the dedicated choir member that she is, was out for practise as soon as they got back. We have one song in our repertoire that has one note that **Pauline** sings by herself and believe me, folks, you should hear it sometime. Tell you what, come to **Scandapades** in the Jubilee Auditorium on Feb. 9 and you will hear it. She has promised to have it perfected by then. As to the highlights of their trip, there wasn't any. The whole trip was just one big highlight from beginning to end. After listening to them talk about if for some time it is obvious they had a most memorable trip abroad.

Jo Wetterberg also went on a trip down east for two months, where she visited with relatives and friends in Cornwall, Ottawa and New York State. I wonder if, while in Ottawa, she found some time to visit **Pierre** and give him some good advice that would benefit us Westerners. Shortly after arriving home, somewhere around the end of October, her niece from Cornwall, Ont., **Mrs. Gwen Whitney**, and her husband, arrived in town for a two week visit. **Gwen** is the daughter of the late **Mrs. M. R. (Laura) Meldrum** who used to live in Buford, Alta., years ago. No doubt some of you readers will

remember them. And then on the Nov. 11 weekend **Jo** had a visitor from Winnipeg, **Mrs. Helga Guttormson**. **Helga** is a cousin of **Jo's**. It is reasonable to assume after all that visiting and receiving visitors she will be needing a bit of rest now.

After doing what they call eavesdropping we learned that **Olive Goodman** got the urge to travel, whereupon just recently she took off for the West Coast to spend three weeks with a niece of hers. Hope you enjoyed yourself, **Olive**. Maybe you could contact **Yours Truly** and let us know how you enjoyed your trip.

I was just sitting here for a few moments meditating, when I decided to phone **Art** and **Vi Arnfinnson** to find out what all they did this past summer. Well it turns out nothing went right with them, just one thing after another, nothing serious though. **Vi** did tear some ligaments in her ankle and eventually had to go to the hospital for surgery. Also they received a phone call from **Lil Sumarlidason** of White Rock, B.C., on Nov. 10 and **Lil** asked them to give their regards to all their friends here in Edmonton.

We have just made another phone call to **Chris** and **Ruth McNaughton** (I'm sure everyone knows **Chris** and **Ruth**) to find out what shenanigans they have been up to this past summer and, wouldn't you know it, **Ruth**, who is apparently athletically inclined, was out curling. However, we shall try to phone again tomorrow.

Here we are, tomorrow has arrived and we have talked to **Ruth**. The conversation went as follows: "Hello, **Ruth**." "Yes, is that you **Les**?" (rather excitedly as though she were glad to hear my voice). "How are you, **Les**?" "I am healthy and happy, **Ruth**." "How are you?" "Oh, I'm just as healthy as an ox." (Why do most people use the expression, "healthy as an ox?"). "Say, **Ruth**, how did your curling game go last night?" She replied enthusiastically, "We won." I replied enthusiastically, "Good. The reason I'm phoning you, **Ruth**, do you know any tidbits of news for my column?" **Ruth** replied, "Not really. We had our holidays so long ago we are about ready for another one. But I do have some good news. **Mrs. Bertha Key**, a very close friend who is just like a mother to us, has moved into the Pembina Lodge in Westlock where she is sharing a unit with a **Mrs. Olson** from Camrose and they are really enjoying it." On this pleasant note the conversation concluded.

Aren't these telephones a wonderful invention? As a result of these facilities we have finished a gab fest with **Lucille Oddson**. After talking for 27 minutes we did get around to gathering the information we were seeking. How many applications do we have at the moment for

the Icelandic Lessons? We were told 14. The lessons will cost \$20.00 each based on the figure of 14 people. If more people sign up it will be cheaper yet. The lessons will be either on Tuesday or Wednesday night starting the 3rd week in January. For more details such as location, time, etc., phone **Lucille Oddson** at 466-6838. Next time we talk to you, **Lucille**, I hope you will have 30 applicants.

APPEALS

Yours Truly is going to take it upon himself to make an appeal. I am sure that all proud Icelanders and the contaminated ones like myself, are proud we have an Icelandic Society here in Edmonton. However, there are quite a number of members who are either forgetting or reluctant to pay their dues. As you know, our membership fee is a mere drop in the ocean, \$2.00 for single people or, \$3.00 per family a year. We do need money urgently to carry on. What is the money needed for? Well, for examples: It costs money to get this newspaper to you every month; it costs money to put on **Thorablót** every February, which is always well attended; it costs money to give the children a Xmas Party every year, etc., etc. I wish everyone who has overlooked their dues would get it into the mail right now and send it to **Gus Roland** at 10936-88 Ave., Edmonton. It sure would please me to hear from **Gus** in a week's time saying, "Les, everybody has paid their dues."

NEXT APPEAL

The Icelandic Society has a choir called the **Saga Singers**, under the direction of **Della Roland**, assisted by **Jo Couves**, of which we are all proud. However, we can always use extra voices, particularly in our tenor section. I accepted the challenge two years ago despite the fact that I can't read music and don't understand a word of Icelandic. How about you accepting the challenge? We meet every Thursday night at 8 p.m. Don't worry about whether you can talk Icelandic. Everybody in our choir is only too happy to help you with the words and the notes, etc. **Leifur Oddson** is always helping me whenever there is a lull in the practise, he goes over the music and certain words. **Al Arnason** does the same thing with the tenors. I guess the women are smarter than us men since **Shirley Thorvaldson** and **Lucille Oddson** have no problems now with the words. So come on, you guys, take up the challenge. Phone **Della Roland** at 433-3393 or **Jo Couves** at 434-7395.

BIRTHDAYS

Congratulations to **Mrs. Helga Johnson** of the Good Samaritan Hospital who will celebrate her birthday this month; also to **Freda Smith** whose birthday is Dec. 4; **Jo Wetterberg** on her 39th birthday on Dec. 21; **Clara Jonsson** and **Les Vigfusson** who celebrate their birthdays on Christmas Day.

ENGAGEMENTS

Congratulations go out to our son, **Ken Hawes**, and **Marguerite Allarie**, on their recent engagement. Wedding plans are tentatively arranged for June, 1974.

HISTORICAL EVENT

On Dec. 9, 1950, 23 years ago, a wonderful couple, one man and one girl, stood before a minister and were united in marriage. These two people are loved and respected by everyone who knows them. They are known to us all as **Mr. and Mrs. Leifur and Lucille Oddson**. There is no doubt that everybody hopes you two will have another 46 years of a wonderful and happy married life together.

Congratulations!

A Question: Has anybody heard or seen **John** and **Ida Olafson** lately? The last we heard they were living in Leduc, Alta. How about you two getting in touch with some of us old buddies sometime. We miss your smiling countenances. (That does mean faces, doesn't it?)

Now we have some information, courtesy of **Lillian MacPherson**, for those people whose hobby is reading. It is entitled: **BOOKS BY WESTERN ICELANDERS**.

Our neighbor in Calgary, **Helen Sveinbjornsson Lloyd**, has recently published a small book of poetry entitled **Cloth of gold and other poems**. **Dr. Richard Beck** wrote the foreword, telling of **Mrs. Lloyd's** life in Scotland and the prairies; her creative gifts of painting and writing, which continue those of her parents (her father wrote the music for the Icelandic national anthem and her mother painted). Her poems rejoice nature's wonders, both great and small, and reflect a gentleness and wonderment. In her poem "Only for love" **Mrs. Lloyd** says, "And I painted him there From my window above Not for gold or for silver But only for love."

I have a suspicion this reflects her attitude to her creative urges—that she pursues her poetry and painting only for love. **Cloth of Gold and other poems** can be bought in Edmonton at **Julian Books**, and in Calgary at **Carmen Moore**, and at **Evelyn DeMilne**.

It is **Helen Sveinbjornsson* Lloyd's** daughter, **Eleanor Oltean**, who has painted the prairie scene which the Icelandic Society of Edmonton is raffling to raise funds for those who lost their homes after the disaster in the Westmann Islands.

***Sveinbjornsson, Helen. Cloth of gold and other poems. Arthur H. Stockwell, Elms Court, Ilfracombe, Devon, 1973.**

Another Canadian Icelander has published a book recently. **Shirley Sigurdson** brought back from Gimli this summer a copy of **Bloodflowers** by **W. D. Valgardson***. This is a collection of ten short stories. Most of the stories involve the characters in a crisis or dangerous or unusual situation. The danger is sometimes represented by environmental forces like weather or water, sometimes by strangers, and sometimes by superstition. The stories are exciting, very readable and not obtuse. The major characters are very well drawn and believable human beings, with whom the reader becomes involved.

Bloodflowers, the title story, was named one of the best American Short Stories of 1971 and won the President's Medal for Fiction that year.

This fine collection of short stories can be purchased at **Cartmell Books** (they had it on order when I phoned). The paperback is \$2.95.

Since December means Xmas that means a lot of people are scratching their heads wondering what to get for Xmas. Well here is a gift suggestion.

The Ladies Auxiliary of the Icelandic Society are selling a limited number of copies of their cook book "THE SWINGING GOURMET". This book contains 165 recipes, all tried and true and all favorites of members and friends. Included is a section

***Valgardson, W. D. Bloodflowers. Toronto, Oberon Press, 1973. \$2.95 pa.**

A Greeting on Christmas Eve

Richard Beck

A message on a cherished journey bent,
This greeting swiftly lifts its wings in flight;
From heart to heart in grateful spirit sent
It spans the starry skies this Holy Night.

Inspired by the dream that Peace may reign
And Goodwill among Men embrace the Earth.
This greeting joins the song that once again
Proclaims triumphantly the Saviour's Birth.

That Song Divine, like flaming beacon, lights
In troubled hearts the faith in better days,
The dawn, which shining through the darkest nights,
Casts, as a guiding hand, its morning rays. □

Letter to the Editor

Dear Mr. Morris:

Mrs. Beck and I greatly appreciate receiving **The Scandinavian Centre News** and thus keep in touch with the activities of our many friends and fellow Scandinavians there. We will never forget the wonderful reception which we were accorded during our visit to Edmonton last March, nor will I ever forget, how well my addresses there were received. With all these things in mind, I am enclosing a Christmas poem of mine which I thought you might wish to publish in the December issue of the **News**.

I also noted that in your November issue you had an article about the books which have been published by The Saga Publishing Co. in Reykjavik, Iceland, including the significant collections of translations **Poems of Today and Short Stories of Today** by **Allan Boucher**. This being the case, I thought you might wish to print in the **News** my review of these books, which I am enclosing herewith. As indicated, it appeared a year ago in the Winnipeg Icelandic weekly **Lögberg-Heimskringla**.

With cordial regards and all good wishes from **Mrs. Beck** and myself.

Sincerely yours,
Richard Beck
28 Marlborough St.
Victoria, B.C.

of Icelandic recipes. Because of the prohibitive cost of printing, a third issue of the book will not be attempted.

Price \$1.75 per copy delivered in Edmonton.

\$1.75 per copy plus 35¢ mailing charges for out of town.

Please contact members of the Ladies Auxiliary for further information or call:

Freda Smith,
15214-81 Avenue,
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COMING EVENTS

Be sure to attend the Children's Xmas Party and entertainment by the Icelandic Society at the Scandinavian Centre in the Viking Room on Sun., Dec. 9. □

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Timely Translations from Present-Day Icelandic Literature

By Dr. Richard Beck From Lögberg-Heimskringla

Haraldur J. Hamar and Heimir Hannesson, co-editors of the highly successful and widely read periodical *Atlantica & Iceland Review*, have expanded their field of cultural activity with the projected publication of a series of books under the general title of *Iceland Review Library*, in which *Iceland Review*, to use their own words, "plans to present significant samples of Icelandic writing, old and new, to the English-speaking reader". This is, indeed, a most commendable undertaking, and especially timely with respect to present-day Icelandic literature.

The two first volumes in the series have already appeared; the first one, *Poems of Today* (From Twenty-five Icelandic Poets), last fall; the second one, *Short Stories of Today* (By Twelve Modern Icelandic Authors), this past summer. Both are translated by Alan Boucher, who is well-known to readers of *Icelandic Review* for his translations and other noteworthy contributions. Some of his translations have also been reprinted in *Lögberg-Heimskringla*. The volumes under review will be dealt with in the order of appearance, *Poems of Today* receiving first consideration.

Mr. Boucher's foreword to it opens with the following statement: "That poetry is untranslatable is a truism and, like most truisms, no more than partly true. All translation is more or less an approximation, though there is little doubt that the loss is proportionately greater in the case of poetry.

After considerable experience in the field of evaluating and editing translations from Icelandic poetry into English, and for many years discussing with my University students such and similar translations from the other Scandinavian literatures, I am, heartily in agreement with Mr. Boucher's succinct statement on the subject. Furthermore, the contention that poetry is untranslatable is refuted by the fact that there are already available in English and other languages many very fine translations from Icelandic poetry, and, on the other hand, Icelandic literatures has, as is well-known, been greatly enriched by excellent translations of works of poetry and individual poems from many languages.

Mr. Boucher also lays down in the foreword the guide lines which he has followed in selecting the poems for translations, and the limits which he has placed upon himself in that respect:

"For the choice of poems, as for their interpretation, I take full responsibility. It has been based as much on translatability as intrinsic merit, and a number of poems—and poets—have reluctantly excluded either for lack of space or because I felt myself unable to do them even rudimentary justice. How far I have succeeded with the twenty-five included here, I leave others to judge."

A comparison with previous collections of translations into English from Icelandic, and with other anthologies of such translations from the Scandinavian languages, Icelandic included, reveals that only the six oldest poets included in *Poets of Today* are represented in the col-

lections and anthologies referred to above, and, as is natural, because of the date of publications, only in the most recent ones. This is not said in criticism of collectors of translators of such volumes of translations, but rather to emphasize the timeliness of Mr. Boucher's collection, in presenting, for the first time in book form, selected poems by the middle-aged and younger group of contemporary Icelandic poets. Therein lies the specific and important value of *Poems of Today* as a pioneer work in the field.

A careful comparison of a number of his translations with the original poems attests that he has not only succeeded remarkably well in retaining the thought content of these, but also, in a rich measure, their rhythmical quality and imagery, along with, what is most important, their flavor and spirit.

While I lament that he has, for the reasons already quoted in his foreword, reluctantly left out a number of poets, which I would doubtless have liked to see represented, and while not all of those included are equally to my liking—which is, of course, a personal opinion—I find myself in agreement with his concluding statement of the foreword, when he says of these poets generally:

"Though they span the present century, I believe that they have a characteristic in common: they are all feeling their way towards a poetic idiom that will speak for the age in which we live. This is the voice of the Iceland of today."

And this is the heart of the matter of the purpose of this collection: To make that voice heard beyond the shores of Iceland in the idiom of the far-flung English-speaking world. And it is a voice definitely worth hearing.

Then I turn to Mr. Boucher's collection of translations, *Short Stories of Today*, for a short discussion, in as much as Miss Caroline Gunnarsson, the editor of *Lögberg-Heimskringla*, has recently (Oct. 12, 1972) on this page evaluated the collection concisely and deservedly with high praise, and also reprinted one of the notable short stories included.

However, before going on to my brief consideration of the collection, it is both fair and proper to do so against the background set forth in the following paragraph in the translator's introductory note:

"The choice of stories in this small collection, for which I admit sole responsibility, has been limited by length. Within these limits I have tried to make it as representative as possible, though much whose quality would otherwise have demanded inclusion has inevitably had to be omitted. The stories are arranged in order of the date of birth of each author, as in my earlier collection of modern Icelandic poems. I hope they will give some idea, in miniature, of what is going on in writing today in Iceland, where the pull between past and present is so crucial."

A number of Icelandic short stories, primarily by writers of the 19th century and the early half of the 20th century, have appeared in an English translation in periodicals and in special collections or anthologies. To the best

of my knowledge, however, only two of the twelve stories included in *Short Stories of Today*, have previously appeared in an English translation, both of them in *The American-Scandinavian Review*, namely, "The Bottomless Pit" by Gudmundur Danielsson, translated by Mrs. Mekkin S. Perkins, and "Cruelty" by Halldor Stefansson, translated by Hallberg Hallmundsson.

This fact, in itself, indicates how welcome an addition Mr. Boucher's collection of Icelandic short stories in his English translation is to those already available in that language, and all the more so, as the stories, which he has selected, are, in terms of quality, worthy of inclusion in a collection of this kind.

The translations of these, which I have been in a position to compare with the Icelandic originals, reveal rare accuracy in language, along with effectively retaining the descriptive element and the character portrayal. Further, they make excellent reading in their English garb. I am certain that this deserved praise applies equally to the other stories in the collection, which I have not had at hand in the Icelandic.

With these splendid translations of his from present-day Icelandic poetry and short stories Alan Boucher has rendered Icelanders everywhere have special reasons to be grateful. The editors of *Iceland Review* also deserve sincere thanks for launching this series of books, which has begun a promising fashion.

The books are very attractive in appearance, and the price of each is \$4.00. They can be ordered from *Atlantica & Iceland Review*, P.O. Box 1238, Reykjavik, Iceland, postfree by surface mail, but there is a small extra charge for air mail.

Dr. Beck is the Compiler and

Editor of Icelandic Lyrics (1930, reprinted 1956), of Icelandic Poems and Stories (1943, reprinted 1968), and the Author of History of Icelandic Poets 1800-1940 (1950), which have become reference works in the field. □

MR. L. L. MORRIS
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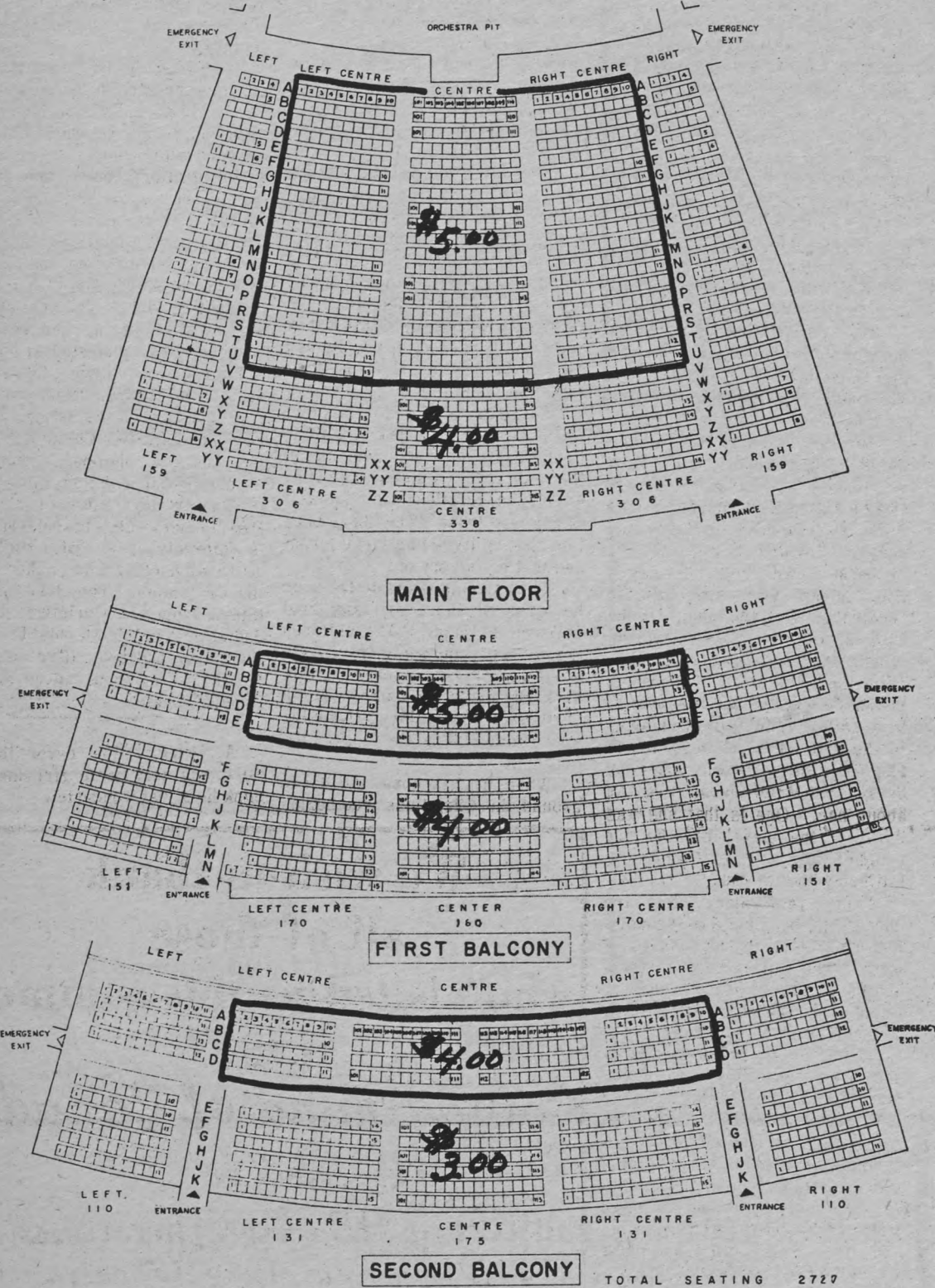
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How Much Should

a Man Sleep?

How much should a man sleep? A man who operates on a gigantic scale and deals in millions confesses to his friends that he sleeps ten hours a night. Of course he does little else except sleep and work, but he enjoys life.

Another man, perhaps the foremost publisher, always sleeps eight hours. He rises eight hours after he goes to bed—no exceptions.

Neither man is ever sick, neither takes long vacations.

Many have the idea that if a man sleeps a lot he can't get much done. That's foolish. What we do while we are awake is more important than how long we are awake.

When the guests are hungry they're not interested in explanations from tardy arrivals.

BUFORD VASA LODGE

By Dolores Johnson

The October meeting was very well attended, and we were honoured to have our District Master, Br. Glen Eliasson with us.

The different Committees gave reports.

The Fall Social suffered a small financial loss, due mostly to the fact that it was fine combining weather that night, and being a farming community, most of us failed to attend.

Nominations of officers for the coming term took up a good part of the meeting.

The meeting was preceded by our annual Pancake Supper which, as usual, was delicious. At the adjournment we enjoyed a short coffee period.

Ester Erikson has returned from a trip with friends from Calgary to Death Valley, Calif. and Las Vegas, Nevada.

The Lundes have had as their guests recently, Erlings sister, Sr. Ella Engstrom of Lake Vermillion, Minn., and his brother and sister-in-law who have spent the summer in the Yukon and were en route to their home in White Rock, B.C.

Ellen and Ray Pearson attended Maureen Niddrie's wedding in Edmonton, recently.

Eric Kvarnberg has been holidaying, at Nelson, B. C. with the Simmons and then to Coeur D' Alene, Idaho.

Hearty congratulations to Skandia Lodge for their fine Smorgasbord at the Masonic Temple. As usual the fare was excellent. Many thanks to all concerned for the welcome given the group from Buford. It was great fun!

We have had a very busy time lately. On Nov. 2 we asked all the men who have helped us build on our home, and their wives to a party in the "new addition". At the moment we have a very charming young lady from Vastergotland, Sweden, holidaying with us. Karin has been working with a group of scouts in Alabama on a scholarship in "The Experiment in International Living". Since the first of September she has been visiting her relatives in the U. S. A. We met her when we were in Sweden 3 years ago and we are very pleased that she decided to include this part of Canada in her trip. I am hoping very much that I can convince her to write a summary of her summer travels for the Scandinavian Centre News.

The annual Christmas party will be on the evening of Dec. 14 at the Willow Creek School and we're hoping for a good turnout. It will be pot-luck again, and Santa will probably drop in during the evening with treats for the children.

I want to take this opportunity to wish all the readers where ever you may live, God Jul och Gott Nytt Ar.

Schang G. Halberg

Passes Away

Schang G. Halberg died Nov. 15 at the age of 83. He was born in Park River, North Dakota on Aug. 1, 1890. His parents had emigrated from Norway.

He was married on Nov. 29, 1913, to Alma Lundin at Grafton, North Dakota.

During the following years they resided in the Adams area where their first three children, Levina, Ruth and Fred, were born.

In 1922 he immigrated to Canada and settled in the Ryley, Alta., district.

In the intervening years between 1922 and 1935 he was employed as a butter maker and engineer in the creamery. They resided at Ryley where Evelyn was born, also at Calmar where Norma was born, and at Viking where Esther, Ellsworth and Arlene were born.

In the spring of 1936, Schang and Alma motored to Grand Forks, North Dakota, as delegates to the Sons of Norway District Convention.

The summer of 1941 the family moved to Edmonton where they lived for a number of years before retiring to Ryley in 1957.

Schang was a past president of Sons of Norway Lodge and a Honorary Life member. He was a shareholder in the Scandinavian Centre, and active in the formation of it.

His greatest enjoyment during retirement was travelling and visiting relatives. This past year he travelled to the west coast, Colorado, California, North Dakota and Ontario.

He was predeceased by his wife, Alma, on Jan. 26, 1970.

He is survived by two sons

and six daughters: Fred and Ellsworth of Edmonton, Mrs. Levina Loades of Ryley, Mrs. Ruth Johnson of Powell River, B.C., Mrs. Norma Main of Langley, B.C., Mrs. Esther Smith of Ottawa, Ont., Mrs. Arlene Toombs of Squamish, B.C.; twenty-six grandchildren, thirteen great-grandchildren and one great-great grandchild. One brother, Walter, of Adams, North Dakota, and two sisters, Mrs. Agnes Anderson of Lakewood, Colorado, and Mrs. Esther Alvesson of Freeland, Wash.

Funeral services were held on Nov. 17, 1973, in Edmonton. Reverend W. E. Burgess officiated. Pallbearers were: Sig Sorenson, Knut Svidal, Stan Hafso, Kalmar Andam, Bill Logan and Peter Sather, all past presidents of Sons of Norway. Soloist was, Darlene Melsness, organist Del Melsness. Interment was held at the Ryley Cemetery.

OLAF SVEEN

PLAYS

CHRISTMAS

MUSIC

Olaf Sveen has a new long playing record, "Olaf Sveen Plays Christmas Music" on London EBX 4182, featuring Christmas melodies from the Scandinavian countries as well as many melodies well known in Canada. The record has a beautiful cover, with children in Norwegian costumes. The record would make a nice gift.

Price: \$3.00 at record shops. Sig Sorenson also has them for sale at his office, phone 424-7311. ***

VASA LODGE SKANDIA



By Millie Weiss

The regular meeting of Lodge Skandia was held on Wed., Nov. 14 at 8 p.m. in the Dania Room with Joan Peterson presiding.

A delicious lunch was served after the meeting.

SICK LIST

Sisters Ella Skoog, Pearl Hober and Joan Knutson are ill. Get well soon!

Eric and Hansine Pierre are back from a trip to different parts of the U.S.A.

Birthday Greetings to Lillie Boyer's mother, Mrs. E. Erickson, who celebrated her 90th birthday on Nov. 11.

COMING EVENTS

The next meeting will be held in the Dania Room on Wed., Dec. 12 at 8 p.m. Ladies Auxiliary will serve lunch after the meeting.

Children's Xmas party will be held on Dec. 2 at 2 o'clock. Mothers, please bring lunch. Santa will arrive during the afternoon. □

Sweden's Ten Best Dressed Women

When Sweden's leading magazine, *Veckojournalen*, makes its annual choice of the country's ten best dressed woman, it looks for background and glamor.

But in modern Sweden, the final list ends up heavily weighted by women who lead active professional lives—like SAS air hostess Wivica Ankarcrona—and whose wardrobes show it.

Only two of the ten are not career women and both of them are also kept busy, one as a mistress of a large country estate and the other as the wife of an industrialist who must do a lot of entertaining.

The others: an opera singer, a sportswoman, an actress, a physician, a banker, a nurse and a ballet dancer.

For all of them, clothes are an important part of life, but none have the time to let fashion become an obsession.

As a result, they go in for active and easy clothes—although they are by no means unanimously in favor of slacks.

They like cottons and linens for summer, furs and silks for winter, and fabrics like English tweeds, loden and the like for outdoors.

Most lean heavily on Swedish ready-to-wear. A few go for international couturiers like Dior, but more are interested in Sweden's own designers.

They get occasional accents from the Italians, particularly Pucci. A few still have that little seamstress in the background.

Their tastes in fur run to seal, otter, white fox and the like. None are listed as owning a mink and at least one gets through the winter in a camel's hair coat.

Because Sweden still likes a bit of formality in the evening, whether for winter dinner at the Royal Palace or summer dancing at Swedish West Coast resorts, there is a considerate stress on long dresses.

Others on the 1973 roster of Sweden's best dressed in addition to Miss Ankarcrona, are opera singer Grynet Molvig; sportswoman Gitté Schlasberg, who helps run the Barseback Golf Club; country-woman Florence Wicksell, mistress of the Bjaragarden estate; Gertrud Frodh, actress at the Royal

Dramatic Theatre; Dr. Agneta Jacobson-Mindus, physician and mother of three; bank accountant Signe Stenso; Ingegerd Winholm, a Stockholm nurse; Barbro Carles-Wahl, a dancer at the Royal Opera, and Elisabeth Coles Frederiksen, wife of a Malmo industrialist.

WIVICA ANKARCRONA

She started school at Sweden's Royal Palace and finished at the Sorbonne.

She has been chosen one of Sweden's ten best dressed women.

She is fluent in seven languages, has studied fashion as well as literature, shorthand as well as Latin.

She is among the first women to break into what has hitherto been an exclusively male preserve, as an airline purser, commanding mixed cabin crews.

Her name is Wivica Ankarcrona, SAS' Chief Air Hostess of Sweden, and she came to North America in October to remind Americans what a swinging and sophisticated place her native Stockholm is.

A petite (5' 2") package of charm, intelligence, and good looks, Wivica barnstormed the United States and Canada on a 17-day, eight-city personal appearance tour Oct. 8-24, appearing as a guest on radio and TV programs and giving interviews to newspaper and magazine editors.

An ideal ambassadress for SAS and Sweden, Wivica has a career and personal background that span international borders.

Her early years of schooling were in the company of Princess Margaretha of Sweden at classes held in the Royal Palace in Stockholm. Following this, she attended the Stockholm Nya Elementarskolan for girls and completed her Baccalaureate in the Humanities, studying Latin, French, German and English. (Wivica also speaks Spanish, besides Norwegian, Danish and Swedish.) The normal SAS air hostess requirement over and above the Scandinavian languages is English, German and one other language.

She also has studied History of Literature at the University of Stockholm, attended dress making and fashion school, studied Spanish in Madrid, and mastered shorthand in four languages at business school. □

"Lucia" and Christmas Celebrations In Sweden

By Ove Kampe

We don't know when we began to celebrate Christmas (jul) in Sweden. We do know, however, that a feast called "jul" was celebrated by the heathens, and many circumstances indicate that the celebration is very old.

The real reason for the celebration isn't exactly known. One theory says it was a feast to the remembrance of the dead. Another says it was a fertility feast, in order to get a good crop.

In the 300 years the fight between the heathens and Christians went on, the Christians finally won out in the middle of the 12th century. The rituals of the heathens and the Christians have been mixed up and sometimes it is difficult to say if it is a heathen or a Christian one.

The enormous development of the society has naturally influenced the Christmas celebrations, too. The industrious society we live in today has commercialized the celebration. Typically for the Swedish, Christmas today means shopping, Christmas trees, Christmas presents and Christmas Fathers (jultomtar) outside the shops.

First I am going to say a little about what we call the "beginning" of Christmas. On the 13th of December we celebrate "Lucia's Day"—"Lucia" comes from the Latin word "lux" which means "light". She is said to have suffered the death of a martyr in the year of "Joy" in Syracuse. She became patron saint of Syracuse. Many legends are told about her. One is that she was burnt at the stake, but the fire couldn't hurt her and they had to kill her with a sword.

Every year many girls are chosen to be Lucia in schools, factories, families and places of work. The papers have contests and the Lucia of Sweden is chosen. Lucia is clothed in white and has a candle crown on her head.

If she is Lucia of the family she gives the members of the family coffee and buns on a tray in bed. In hospitals Lucia also gives the patients coffee and a special sort of bun (lussekatt) which is baked especially for this day. Pupils often go to their teachers early in the morning and give them coffee and buns which they have brought.

In the evening Lucia and the other Lucia candidates (runners up who are also clothed in white and have candles in their hands) go by sleighs drawn by horses through the streets. The Lucia celebration is a bright point in the dark and cold December. Everybody is now longing for Christmas.

Christmas Eve is the great day, especially for the children. The whole day they are longing to open their presents. If they live in the country, they can ski with their fathers into the forest looking for a Christmas tree. If they live in a town, they have to buy one. They then put on things like candles, flags, tinsel, coloured balls, and so on. It was in the middle of the 19th century we began to bring the trees into the house. Before, they were placed outdoors.

The climax of Christmas celebration is in the afternoon of Christmas Eve, consisting of the Christmas dinner and the visit by Father Christmas. The dinner

consists of ham, rice porridge and dried stockfish (fish which is lyed and then put into water weeks before Christmas) as well as other goodies. In later years turkey has also been popular, but most Swedes prefer ham.

When it is time to have porridge you must make a rhyme before you start to eat. You can also put an almond into the porridge and the person who gets it must be able to rhyme.

At about five or six o'clock it is time for the presents. The Father asks a neighbor to be a Father Christmas (jultomte). He puts on a mask with a long white beard and a red woolen cap and fur coat. During the year the children have been told that if they are not good (kind), Father Christmas will not come to them with any presents. So it is a very exciting moment for the child when he or she hears Father Christmas coming and knocking on the door. Many children are very frightened for they don't know it is a human being. They have been told that he lives in a large forest and that he is very old.

When he comes inside the door he asks if there are any kind children at home. The children answer, of course: "Yes!" He now takes out the presents from his sack and reads the names written on them. The children thank the kind Father Christmas for the presents.

When he has gone, the dance around the Christmas tree begins

and many carols are played and sung. In the evening the children go on playing with their presents.

Because children become afraid of Father Christmas, many of them are now told that there is no real Father Christmas. This habit of giving presents has been common since the end of the 19th century.

On Christmas Day many people get up very early to go to church. The early mass (julotta) begins at six o'clock and the churches are crowded with people.

In earlier times they went to church by sleighs drawn by horses. As it was very dark they had torches. Nowadays, they put torches outside the houses before they go to church and it is a very fascinating sight. The rest of the day is very boring and nothing happens. You just stay at home. In later years, however, there has been little change. Now you can visit friends on Christmas Day, too. The day after Christmas Day is also a holiday. Nothing especially happens then, either.

Twenty days after Christmas Eve (January 13th) the celebration is definitely over. Then children go to each other and "dance out" the Christmas. They take off the things from the Christmas tree, and then it is thrown outside. But then, of course, after eleven months go by, you can celebrate "Lucia" again. □

A young fellow never is so worthless that some girl doesn't think he's just wonderful.

We wish to thank
all of those
who visited us this summer
at the
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and a
Very Merry Christmas
Vagn and Marg Jakobsen

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NEWS FROM FINLAND

By Airi Langeste

By E. Kankkunen

First of all I wish to thank Arvi Liimatainen for the excellent job he has done writing the Finnish Society news column, articles on Alberta Cultural Heritage Council, etc., in my absence. It is obvious that Arvi is the professional while I am just a novice. I asked Arvi to keep up the good work, however he insisted that he was too busy with all his other interests. However, Arvi will continue reporting on matters relating to the Alberta Cultural Heritage Council as he is the Finnish representative.

Auditions for Scandapades '74 will be over before this edition of the Scandinavian Centre News is distributed. The Finnish input might be totally missing from this year's show unless some unexpected talent shows up for the last audition scheduled for Nov. 25. Some of the performers from previous shows are either working out of the city or are unwilling to take part this year. Even the choir appears to be in trouble. Mr. Tapani Erkkila earlier consented to direct the choir but so few members have shown up for practices that Mr. Erkkila has threatened to resign. So if you think you can hold a tune and have some interest in keeping our Finnish Cultural Heritage alive, now is the time to come forth as the choir desperately needs your help. Who knows, you might find it to be an interesting and rewarding experience.

One of the more eligible young bachelors in our Edmonton Finnish community finally decided to give up his freedom and take the big step. Linda Moora, daughter of Mrs. Fay Moora, and Pentti Sipari were married Oct. 19 in Wesley Robertson United Church followed by a reception for some 65 guests at the Scandinavian Centre.

A surprise party and a shower for Mr. and Mrs. Teuvo Ristola was held on Nov. 1 at the home of Mrs. Anne Sahuri. Teuvo, son of Mr. & Mrs. Vilho Ristola, met and married his new bride while on a extended holiday in Finland. Teuvo and Eija returned together last June to make their home in Edmonton. They wish to express their appreciation via the following:

"Thank you very much to Mr. and Mrs. Sahuri and all the people who gave us the surprise party."

Teuvo and Eija Rostola

Paavo Nurmi's funeral service was held Oct. 11 in the Helsinki Old Church. The church was filled to the last seat by people who wanted to pay their last respects to the top athlete. You could see many old and young sportsmen amongst the mourners.

As soon as president Kekkonen (who also was a personal friend of Paavo Nurmi) arrived, the service started with Tauno Aikas playing an organ solo composed by Heikki Klemetti. After that, Matti Lehtinen sang a song by Ahti Sonninen, "Koska Valaisee Kointahtoen".

Officiating at the funeral service was Bishop Osmo Alaja and Marijatta Vaananen, minister of education, delivered a speech.

Violin artist Hannu Rauma played the Konsta Jylhas composition "Vaiennut Viulu". This was specially requested before his death.

Most flowers by private people and organizations had already been delivered in the morning but 19 more wreaths were placed on the casket during the funeral service in the church.

The first one to walk up to the casket was Paavo Nurmi's son, Matti, and after him his younger brother, Martti. After the relatives came president Kekkonen, then the representatives of the Paavo Nurmi Foundation, followed by many Sport Organizations, the Cities of Turkul and Helsinki, Finlands Olympic Winners Organization and then Paavo Nurmi's housekeeper.

Pallbearers were: Ilmari Salminen, Harri Larva, Toivo

COMING EVENTS

Adults' Christmas Party will be held at the Scandinavian Centre on Dec. 1 in the Nordic Room.

Children's Christmas Party will also be held at the Scandinavian Centre, in the Nordic Room starting at 2:00 p.m., Dec. 9.

MEETINGS

General and Executive Meeting at Sahuri's on Dec. 11 starting at 7:30 p.m. This meeting is preparatory to the Annual Meeting usually held in January.

"My sincere thanks to all for the lovely gifts I received during the recent surprise baby-shower. Special thanks to Anneli Thurlin who arranged the occasion."

—Mary-Anne Laitinen.□

Loukola, Taisto Makl, Viljo Heino, Lasse Virtanen, Veikko Karvonen and Lasse Viren, all famous runners.

The casket was then taken to Turku by car where cremation and burial took place with only the relatives in attendance.

Miss Monica Sundin, 19, from Sweden, was chosen in Helsinki on Oct. 3 as "Miss Scandinavia 1974". About the same time last year Miss Scandinavia, Finlands Anneli Bjorkling, 21, was chosen "Miss International" in Osaka, Japan. Both girls are models.

Quadruplets were born in Turku Central Hospital on Oct. 2. They are all healthy and each of them weighed a little over 1 kilo (2 lbs.) when they were born. These are the first children to the happy parents, Helja and Veli Matti Jernberg.

Wishing You all
A Joyful Christmas
and a
Bright New Year!

□

(Continued from Page 7)

Christmas

DAYS VARY

It isn't always Santa who brings the presents, and they don't always arrive on December 25. St. Befana, a wizened old woman, remembered in legend because she refused to leave her sweeping to search for the Saviour, brings gifts to Italian youngsters on Epiphany (January 6). Swiss children receive theirs from Christkindli (the Christ Child). In Poland, youngsters thank Good Star (a beautiful woman) for their presents.

In Mexico, families and guests promenade through the house, knocking on each door, carrying figures of Mary and Joseph, seeking shelter. Finally they are admitted to the last room, and hold silent services. At the end, the children receive their surprises.

Glass balls, icicles, bubbling lights, gingerbread Santas, and spun-sugar angels—no matter how you trim it, the Christmas tree is beloved.

Because of their eternal-life significance, evergreen trees have been a part of both pagan and Christian celebrations for centuries. The decorated tree as we know it was brought to America by Germans.

One legend has it that the young Jesus and seven angels decorated the first tree, for a poor family in Nazareth. Another relates that an olive tree, a date, and a pine all grew around the manger. The olive and date trees gave of their fruits. The pine had nothing to give, so stars came down from the heavens to twinkle on its green

IT'S CHRISTMAS

Caroline Gunnarsson

Her foot caught in the silver tinsel she
Is winding and winding like moonlight around
A tree that stands, a diamond-decked fugitive
From the forest, in a corner of the room,
She stumbles toward the window, where yesterday
She hung a star that feeds its glow on a live
Current of warmth and light which wraps
All within her house in wellbeing.
The man at a far branch of the tree drops
His end of the moonlight and goes to her side.
In the circle of his arm she gains her feet.
And the two stand under the star at the window
Gazing like wide-eyed children at real moonlight
Weaving a shimmering pattern on crisp, white
Snow. Like mercury it eludes the bewitched
Eye, never to be prisoner of human memory.
A mystery forever, the moonlight and stars
Casting light and shadow on frozen snow
This charmed evening.

Unheard this moment are the shouts of
Two small children. Balancing an angel
And a popcorn ball in sticky hands, they
Talk of the Moon, too, and men who will
Leave this earth on Christmas Day,
Leave their children, leave their wives,
Leave the magic of the Moon's distance
And draw close to the stark reality
Of its burn-out fires, while earthlings
Bask in the magic of their afterglow
And Earth children hold the dream like
A fragile bauble that maybe the astronauts
Will make a gift of the Moon's nearness
At Christmas

In a deep chair in a far corner of the room,
A shapely head in soft white curls
Nods in the warm glow of the candlelit twilight.
A tiny girl stands by a small window
In the dusk of evening and traces the
Delicate pattern of the flowers on the glass,
She blows warm breath on the frozen pane
And through a circle of clear transparency sees
The moonbeams flit over the shining runners
Of a sleigh standing on the hard snow.
Far off on the plains beyond the bare trees
A coyote howles in hunger and loneliness
And she shudders at the grief of him.
She turns and takes a candle from the hand
Of her mother and places it in the window.
Its light is a living flame that feeds on
Its waxen form. In the middle of the small
Room a shiny iron stove closes around roaring
Flames that feed on trees of the forest.
Rendered fuel in the sweat of a father's brow,
They wrap his loved ones in wellbeing while the
Wind howls like a hungry wolf at the door
Of the small cabin in the clearing.
Grandma is dreaming in the deep chair
At the far end of the room.

The man and the woman turn from the window
To their children, who look up with faces
That glow like candles in the dusk.
Grandma rubs her eyes, blinks at the
Twinkling tree and smiles wistfully down
The years to the generations that have everything
With more to come and the moon about to
Drop into their laps.
But the light is in the window, where it
Has been for uncounted ages on this enchanted
Evening, the tree stands tall and glowing
In the shelter of its branches an ancient
Angel sits with grubby, child-caressed wings.
Warmth, light and a dreamy tenderness
Draws close the generations.
It's Christmas.

branches.

Holly is another popular Christmas decoration with many legends. One says that the holly kept secret the whereabouts of Christ when His enemies were searching and so was allowed to

keep its leaves all winter. Another is that the tree was originally called the holy tree, because it first sprang from beneath His footsteps in some countries it is called Christ's-thorn and is frequently a symbol of immortality. □



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LEIF EIRIKSSON CLUB

By Bjorgvin Sigurdson

The time has come to break silence and report on some of the activities of our club—past, present and future.

To begin with, we are very happy to report that our “Amy” has been out of the hospital for some time now and is recuperating at home, and hopefully will again soon be busy as a bee in the club doings, as well as her other work.

The “Leif Eiriksson Day” banquet, held on Oct. 19 at the Danish Canadian Club, was a huge success. The guest speaker was Arild Borch of Saskatoon. His topic: “The Vikings, Fact or Fiction”. The food was excellent, mostly Scandinavian dishes, a good orchestra, so a good time was had by all who attended.

The most important item before the club at present is the preparation for the Christmas party, to be held Dec. 7 at the Rehabilitation Centre on Memorial Drive N.E. The party will consist of a short concert featuring several entertainers as well as our choir, followed by a buffet style lunch and dancing. Icelandic food will of course be featured—rullapylsa, hangikjot, vinarterta, kleinur, laufabraud, and hopefully skyr and hardfisk, and the different kinds of saetabraud, that our ladies are so capable of making. Last year’s party was an overwhelming success—so come, one and all, for an enjoyable and get-acquainted evening. The SOUNDTRACKS of Calgary, an excellent band I am told, will supply the music for dancing.

It is with deep regret that we learned about the passing away of one of our members, Mrs. Inga Laufy Finnson (Hordal). Mrs. Finnson passed away in the Foothills hospital on Nov. 5 after a lengthy illness at the age of 77. She was born at Mountain, North Dakota. She emigrated with her parents to Kristnis, Sask., where she met and married Fritz W. Finnson, on Sept. 22, 1917, in Wynyard, Sask. They homesteaded in the Quill Lake district, later moving to Wynyard where their family was born. In 1942 the family moved to Dickson, Alta., and later to Markerville, where her husband predeceased her in 1952. She also was predeceased by her second oldest daughter in 1962.

Mrs. Finnson has lived in Calgary for the past 20 years. She is survived by one son, Bill of Calgary and five daughters, Mrs. R. W. (Gudrun) Williamson, of Langley B.C. Mrs. A. (Kathryn) Jamieson and Mrs. D. (Lola) Kemp, both of Calgary, Mrs. C. (Lilja) Sveinson, Maple Ridge, B.C. and Mrs. W. (Ester) Bridge, Vancouver, B.C., 26 grandchildren and two great grandchildren. Funeral services were at Markerville Lutheran Church on Thur., Nov. 7, with Rev. John Voos of Sylvan Lake Presbyterian Church officiating. Interment was at Tindastol Cemetery. Mrs. Finnson was active in Vonin Ladies Aid in Markerville, Home and School and Community activities and was an interested and loyal member of our club lending a helping hand wherever and whenever she could. We extend our most sincere sympathy to her family.

We also extend our deepest sympathy to Mrs. Cliff (Mavis) Marteinson on the recent death of her father.

It may be of interest to book lovers that there are two books by Icelandic Canadian authors available in Calgary, “CLOTH OF

GOLD AND OTHER POEMS” by Helen (Sveinbjornsson) Lloyd. This book has just been released and was published in England. Foreword is by Dr. Richard Beck. This book is available at the Evelyn DeMille and Carmen Moore book stores in Calgary, priced at \$5.95. A new shipment of Judge Walter J. Lindal’s book, “THE ICELANDERS IN CANADA” arrived a short time ago. This is “Canada Ethnica II” and should be a must in all homes of Icelandic ethnic origin; obtainable from Mrs. Ruth Hilland, 6919 LeFroy Court, Calgary 10, S.W. Priced reasonably at \$7.95.

Thorhallur and Helen Johnson will be celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary on Dec. 30, a small reception will be held at the Glenmore Auxilliary Hospital that afternoon. Thorhallur and Helen both hail from the Markerville area. Our sincere congratulations and best wishes to them both. May you have many more!

Our club is doing well this year we have reached the 100 paid-up-members mark but there is room for many more, so let’s set our sights for the 200 number by this time next year. □

the location.

For a happy combination of winter sports and sophisticated city life, Stockholm itself offers a rich variety of ski lifts right within the city limits and in nearby surroundings. Most are flood-lit for nighttime skiing, which means that you can spend a day shopping in Stockholm’s fascinating boutiques, browsing through its museums or taking in the historic sites of the 13th century Old Town, and still get in some time in the slopes in the evening.

Of course, Stockholm’s night life is one of its biggest attractions for many visitors, so you’ll want to spend some evenings dining in the city’s intimate cellar-restaurants, catching a nightclub show, or joining the action in its discotheques.

For more information on the winter scene in Sweden, contact the Scandinavian National Tourist Offices at 505 Fifth Ave., New York, N.Y. 10017 or 3600 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles, Calif., 90010. □

If anyone thinks business is easy, let him try making something, selling it, and then collecting the money.

nine days of cross country racing, relays and jumping contests (Feb. 16-24), and Salen, in the North-western corner of Dalarna province, will once again draw some 9,000 entrants to the massive Vasa Ski Race, a 55-mile cross country competition held each year on the first Sunday in March.

Other areas where the winter sports action is particularly lively include Harjedalen province which boasts 41 inches of snow through April 15; the province of Jamtland, with five major areas providing full facilities, and Lapland, where the height of the winter season is from February to the end of May.

Besides skiing, Sweden’s winter resort areas offer other snowy sports such as skating and skate sailing, ice yachting, curling and tobogganing, plus plenty of apres-ski activity.

Accommodations range from full service resort hotels to modern rental chalets to rustic cottages in more isolated forest settings. A double room with full pension at a Swedish winter sports hotel will average about 75 kronor (approximately \$18) per day, while the price for a cottage with four beds varies from 375 kronor (less than \$95) to 650 kronor (about \$165) per week depending on the facilities and

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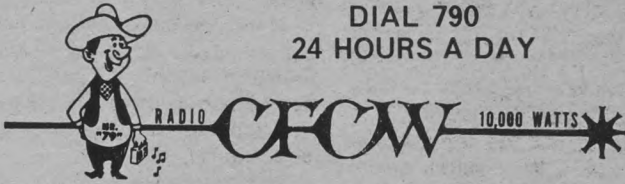
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Kitchen Corner

It wouldn't be Christmas without homemade candies and cookies.

SUGAR AND SPICE NUTS

- 1 c. sugar
- 1 tsp. cinnamon
- 6 tbsp. milk (canned or whole)
- 1/2 tsp. vanilla
- 3 c. nuts: almonds, walnuts and/or pecans

Boil sugar, cinnamon and milk to a very soft ball. Remove from heat and stir until creamy. Add vanilla and nuts. When nuts are coated, pour out on wax paper and separate.

BROWN SUGAR FUDGE.

- 1 1/2 cups white sugar
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1/3 cup light cream
- 1/3 cup milk
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1/2 cup nuts

Butter sides of heavy saucepan. Combine sugars, cream, milk and butter. Heat over medium heat, stirring constantly until sugars dissolve and mixture comes to a boil. Cook to soft ball stage (238°). Remove from heat and cool to lukewarm without stirring. Add vanilla and beat until fudge becomes very thick and starts to lose its gloss. Stir in the nuts and spread in buttered, shallow pan. Cut into squares while still warm.

MINCEMEAT COOKIES

- 1 cup shortening
- 2 cups brown sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 3 1/2 cups flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon nutmeg
- 2 1/2 cups mincemeat or canned mincemeat pie filling
- 1/2 cup water
- Nuts, if desired.

Cream shortening and brown sugar. Add eggs and vanilla and mix well. Sift flour, salt, soda, cinnamon, and nutmeg together and add alternately with mincemeat

and water. Drop by teaspoonfuls on greased cookie sheet. Bake at 350° until set and lightly browned (approximately 12-15 minutes).

ALMOND XMAS BALLS

- 1 cup butter
- 1/4 cup icing sugar
- 2 cups flour
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1 cup ground almonds
- 1 tsp. almond flavoring
- 18 or 20 cherries (cut in halves)

Cream butter and sugar, add flour, almonds, salt and flavoring. Take 1 teaspoon of dough and form into a ball around a cherry half. Bake cookies at 325° for 35 mins. Roll in icing sugar while warm.

TURKEY TIPS

A quick, different, delicious idea on how to turn out a brand new dish with your left-over Christmas turkey.

HAWAIIAN-STYLE TURKEY CASSEROLE

- 1/2 12-oz. pkg. noodles
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 2 tablespoons green pepper
- 1 tablespoon pre-sifted flour
- 1 cup milk
- 1 10-oz. can condensed cream of mushroom soup
- 2 cups chopped leftover turkey or chicken
- 1 20-oz. can drained pineapple chunks
- 1 tablespoon chopped pimiento
- 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1 teaspoon salt
- Few grains pepper
- 1 cup blanched almond halves

Cook noodles according to directions on package. Melt butter in top of double boiler; saute green pepper until soft, over direct heat. Remove green pepper and stir in flour; slowly add milk, stirring constantly. Cook, stirring constantly over boiling water, until mixture thickens. Stir in remaining ingredients, including the green pepper and half of the almonds. Place alternate layers of cooked noodles and creamed mixture (beginning with noodles and ending with creamed mixture) in a greased 2-quart casserole. Brown remaining almonds slightly, in oven—

NORDSTJARNAN NEWS

By Sherry Havanka

The regular meeting was held at Lone Ridge Hall Nov. 3. Guests attending were new District Master Glen Eliasson, District Deputy Walter Pearson and Grand Lodge Executive Board District Secretary Bert Johnson. Visitors from Calgary Lodge were also present.

Business for the evening consisted of finalizing Lutfisk supper on Nov. 17 and nomination of officers. Following adjournment everyone enjoyed sampling many wines and cheeses.

A speedy recovery to Alvera Brown, John Holmlund and Helen Havanka who have been patients in hospital.

Good to see Mrs. Bertha Edin up and around after a stay in hospital.

Congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. Carl Brown who celebrated

their 40th wedding anniversary recently.

SCANDINAVIAN RECIPE FOR DECEMBER

JOLABRAUD (CHRISTMAS BREAD)

By Lillian MacPherson

- 1 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup butter
- pinch salt
- 1 tsp. ground cardamom seed
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup milk
- 3 cups flour
- 2 1/2 tsp. baking powder
- 1 cup bleached sultana raisins
- 1/2 cup citron peel, finely cut
- glace cherries (optional)

Blend sugar and butter, add eggs. Sift flour, salt and baking powder, and add alternately with milk. Add raisins and peel. Bake at 275°-350° for 1 1/2 hours. Makes two loaves.

There's nothing like glogg, the traditional Scandinavian drink, to warm a winter party.

A SIMPLE GLOGG

To extend this, add either 1 1/2 cups of alcohol, 2 cups sweet vermouth or a quart or more of muscatel wine.

- 3 whole cardamom seeds
- 8 whole cloves
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 1 wide strip orange peel
- 1 1/2 cups water
- 1/4 cup blanched almonds
- 1/2 cup light raisins
- 26-oz. bottle red Bordeaux or Burgandy
- 26-oz. bottle port and 1/2 bottle cognac (see below)
- sugar, to taste

Tie seeds, cloves, cinnamon and peel in a cheesecloth bag, place with water in enamelled or steel pot and bring to a boil. Simmer covered 10 minutes, then add almonds, raisins and simmer another 10 minutes.

Add wine, port, cognac (you may simply use 2 1/2 bottles of wine if you wish), and bring quickly to a boil. Remove from heat, let cool, and store in a cool place overnight.

When ready to serve, remove spice bag and heat glogg, but don't boil again. Add sugar to taste and serve in warmed mugs or glasses containing a few almonds and raisins. A small silver spoon makes it possible to eat the raisins and nuts. Serves 8-10.

If you have a favorite recipe, especially a Scandinavian one, please send it to the:

Scandinavian Centre News
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□

Norway Natural for Winter Sports

If skiing is your sport, Norway—where it all began—should be your destination this winter. Whether or not you were "born with skis on", as most Norwegians are, you'll find slopes to suit your expertise and facilities to fit your vacation budget in almost any area of this country where Nordlanders first ventured forth on skis more than 4,000 years ago.

Skiers can choose from a number of attractively-priced packages or tailor their own skiing vacation around Norway's comfortable, low-cost log cabin rentals and hostel accommodations.

Special ski touring trips by dog-sled, available through the Norwegian Touring Club or SAS, Nordic ski touring courses out of Oslo and other packages featuring the popular ski areas at Voss, Geilo and Lillehammer are scheduled for 1974.

Local skiing competitions are held throughout the season at most ski areas and more than a dozen major events, from Holmenkollen Days in Oslo (March 7-10), which attract the largest gathering of international ski experts in the world, to winter festival competitions (March 16-24) at Narvik, beyond the Arctic Circle, take place from January through June.

ethno-backgrounds; the sharing of our cultural diversity and richness, and appreciation of our evolving identity.

- (3) To preserve the cultural wealth of our past: the rites, arts, music, etc. of our native peoples; the old-world contributions of our immigrant settlers; the songs, dances, social ways that each ethno-group brought by way of cultural dowry to this new land and which, in many cases, is becoming a common cultural mosaic, uniquely our own.

- (4) To stimulate the living arts—painting, dancing, music, handicrafts, the human drama—precisely because of our diversity of heritage background, and thus help Alberta's writers, musicians, dramatists, dancers, etc. to national and international acceptance, appreciation and recognition.



Scandinavian delegates at the Lieutenant-Governor's home after the Alberta Cultural Heritage Council Meeting. (l. to r.) Per Nielsen (Danish), Mrs. Astrid Hope (Norwegian), Mrs. Margaret Cameron (Icelandic), Premier Peter Lougheed, Mrs. and John Cumberbatch (Swedish).

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Golden Wedding

A former director of the Scandinavian Centre and active while the building was being built, H. August (Gus) Hansen, and his wife, Lydia, of 12921-109 Ave., celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary on Dec. 15 with a quiet family gathering.

Their oldest son, Chris, with wife and two sons, will be coming up from Grants Pass, Oregon, where he has a general insurance business. The second son, Harold, who is with a New York firm and travels all over the world on company business, is at present in Japan but hopes to be back to attend. Their only daughter, Karen, a linguistic expert, is with the Edmonton Public School Board.

The Hansens were married in Saskatchewan, where they were engaged in Creamery, General Store and Implement businesses for many years. During the first part of World War II, Gus held a highly responsible position in explosives plants built by Defence Industries, after which he was engaged in the dairy business in Alberta for several years. He then was in the employ of Eldorado Mining Co. in the N. W. T. for several years and finished up doing office work and accounting until his recent retirement.

Christmas Throughout the World

Christmas! The BIG holiday of the year.

Such a gay holiday, with so many "trimmings", that we tend to forget how satisfying and heart-warming a simple observance without expensive gifts and elaborate decorations, can be.

This year let's shop to consider what's behind our familiar Christmas doings.

Probably no two Canadian families celebrate Christmas exactly the same way—but several customs are almost universal. The creche, or Nativity scene, for example, is set up under the tree or on the mantel every year.

Do you realize that the first creche took shape in a thirteenth-century Italian stable, when St. Francis of Assisi pictured the story of the Nativity, with live animals, for his faithful, who could not read the Bible? Later, it was moved into a church and, with the Renaissance, became a gorgeous pageant (with its religious background subdued). Churches still enact the Nativity as a pageant or tableau, perhaps put on by the Sunday school.

CRECHE POPULAR

In southern Europe and South America, the creche is more

familiar than the Christmas tree. In Spain there is a crib, or presepio, in almost every home, around which the family sings and dances on Christmas Eve. The presepio is just as common in Italy, and many of our elaborate antique creches came from there.

Santa Claus, as most young people picture him, is a native New Yorker. Surprised? He first got his jolly smile, red suit, and reindeer from Thomas Nast, the nineteenth-century cartoonist who created Tammany's tiger and the Republican Party's elephant.

CHILDREN'S PATRON

Originally, however, Santa came to North America with the Dutch, as St. Nicholas. Because he had been particularly kind to children, St. Nicholas was their patron saint. He was long a part of Christmas festivals, but until Nast took up his pen, St. Nicholas was a thin, pale, monkish creature, dressed in black, riding a mare.

Belgian children await St. Nicholas on his name day, December 6, and put their shoes out on the hearth. In Denmark, Santa is accompanied by the yule gnome, a sprightly underground fellow who guards homes and children. Papa Noel, dressed like our Santa, comes through the window in Brazil, instead of down the chimney. But thin or fat, jolly or serious, Santa is a visitor welcomed by all good children.

FROM LAPLAND

We have the people of Lapland to thank for adding reindeer to our image of Santa Claus.

The Russians were the first to accept St. Nicholas as a patron saint, and from Russia the idea spread to Lapland. The Lapps are famous for their reindeer teams, and it was only natural that the Lapp children believed the Christmas saint would assemble his own team to haul his great load of toys over the winter snow.

It was also in Lapland that the idea evolved that St. Nicholas lived at the North Pole.

On the other hand, the Lapp children believed that reindeer could survive. After all, reindeer are among the world's most northerly living animals, and the Lapps themselves tended herds north of the Arctic Circle.

Lapp children also knew that reindeer would probably be Santa's choice at his North Pole workshop because they require absolutely no shelter from even the worst winds of winter, and can live entirely on reindeer moss, a gray lichen that grows in the north.

GOOD GRIP

Furthermore, reindeer travel well on ice and snow because of their broad hoofs which spread out for a better grip when pressed down on a hard surface.

And any Lapp child could tell you that reindeer are the fastest animals on ice, capable of pulling a sled over a slippery surface as fast as 10 miles an hour.

How fast can reindeer fly? That, the Lapp children must reluctantly admit, is a question only St. Nicholas can answer.

The Lapland-style Santa Claus was gradually accepted throughout Scandinavia.

Without its modern, perhaps too-commercial, emphasis, gift-giving has been a part of this holiday since the first Christmas, when the Wise Men brought their gold, myrrh, and frankincense to the manger. At about the same time the pagan Romans were developing their festival honoring Saturnus. With singing and pro-

cessions, this was a merry celebration for rich and poor as they brought gifts to the emperor.

(Continued on Page 8)

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DANIA DOINGS



By Lili Nielsen

DANIA held its annual dinner and dance on Oct. 20, with 240 people attending. Membership draw was won by Mr. and Mrs. Andy Kjeersgaard, but unfortunately they were not present.

On Oct. 24 DANIA held its Annual General Meeting which was attended by 30 members. The following is a list of the new Board of Directors for the 1973/74 term:

PRESIDENT—Allan Sorensen—452-3387.

VICE-PRESIDENT—Ole Hansen—435-6135.

TREASURER—Bendt (Julle) Nielsen—452-2652.

SECRETARY—Lili Nielsen—435-5655.

DIRECTORS—Per Nielsen—436-4109.

Alfred Baumann—479-1429.

Ruth Aaquist—475-3520.

SUBSTITUTES—Eric Landsperg and Hennig Larsen.

REVISORS—Svend Nielsen and Claus Jacobsen.

There will be NO Whist-drive in December, but remember the next date—Jan. 8, 1974.

BIKUBEN will hold their annual Christmas Party on Dec. 10 at 8:00 p.m. Hope all the ladies will show up so we can have a good time together. Each lady is to bring a little gift and some of her goodies for us to sample. The meeting will be at 12424-141 St. Looking forward to seeing you all. If you like, bring a friend, but have her bring a little gift, too, so nobody will be left out.

DANIA will be having its Annual

THE DANISH SOCIETY
COUPON FOR MEMBERSHIP 1974

Turkey Bingo on Dec. 11, in the Scandinavian Centre at 8:00 p.m. Come out for this evening and bring your friends. Maybe you will be lucky and win your Christmas turkey, duck or goose. Admission—\$2.50 per person, which includes 2 cards and coffee. Extra cards will be sold at 25¢ per card.

DANIA'S Annual New Years Dance will be held on Sat., Jan. 5, 1974 at 7:00 p.m. in the Viking Room of the Scandinavian Centre. Get your tickets early from any of the Board members. Deadline for the tickets is Dec. 27. This year we shall be serving Open Face Sandwiches supplied by Danish Smorgasbord Ltd. in Calgary but they will be made in Edmonton the day of the dance. We are getting all the meat and trimmings from Calgary and one of the girls from Danish Smorgasbord Ltd. in Calgary will be coming up to Edmonton to supervise the making of the Sandwiches. We hope to see as many of you as possible come out and enjoy this special event.

A very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all. Glaedelig Jul samt et Godt Nyttar.

Have you renewed your Membership for 1974? If not, please send for it right away. The price is \$5.00 per year for single or family. Use this coupon to send for your 1974 membership card in DANIA. Enclose \$5.00 and send it to the Secretary, Mrs. Lili Nielsen, 3903-111A St., Edmonton, Alta, T6J 1G2.

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Scandinavian History and Culture Probed

Some Place-Name Legends

By Dr. Christopher S. Hale
Assistant Professor of
Scandinavian Languages
University of Alberta

While in Iceland during the summer of 1966, I gathered place names in Oxndalshreppur in the north of the country, not far from the city of Akureyri. Many of the names I found there were connected to legends, and by talking with the local farmers and making use of the archives in the National Museum of Iceland, I was able to collect a number of these legends.

A place name will frequently contain the name of some supernatural being connected with it or the name of some person to whom something has happened there. Furthermore, many names, while not actually containing such elements, will often have some legend linked to them.

In this article I should like to examine a few names from Oxndalur along with their legends and compare some of these legends with similar tales and traditions found in other parts of Iceland and in Norway.

Two words in Icelandic for spirits or non-human beings are *alfur* ('elf') and *huldufolk* ('hidden people') which correspond to Norwegian *alv* and *huldrer*. In Icelandic these two words usually refer to the same beings; in fact certain Icelandic legends tell of these people preferring the name *huldufolk* to *alfur* as when one of their people made the remark, "Vid huldufolkid erum ekki meiri alfar en thid mennirnir," ("We hidden people are no more elves than you human beings,") to a certain farmboy.

The traditional account of the origin of the *huldufolk* over all of Scandinavia is as follows. Once God visited Adam and Eve, and he asked them to show him what they did. They showed him everything including their children, but some of them they had hidden away because they had not been washed. God knew this, though, and said, "That which is hidden to me shall be hidden to men." Thus the descendants of these children became the 'hidden people', and men can never see them unless they permit themselves to be seen.

The two place names in Oxndalur which contain the words *alfur* and *huldufolk* are *Alfaborg* ('fortress of the elves') and *Huldufolkskirkja* ('church of the hidden people'). *Alfaborg* is a very common place name in Iceland, and in the same case of Oxndalur it refers to a series of cliffs. Since elves and *huldufolk* lead a very similar life to the ones humans do, it is quite natural that they should have their own dwelling places, and *Alfaborg* is one of them, according to the people of the valley. That they also had churches is witnessed by *Huldufolkskirkja* which is a large stone on one of the farms. It is said that many people have heard singing coming from this stone while passing by it during the evening. Two other names of dwelling places of elves are *Badstofa* ('bathhouse') and *Kirkjuklettur* ('church cliff'), both of which are cliffs.

Legends about *utburdur* ("the exposing of children") are quite common in both Iceland and in Norway. These legends are generally about unmarried mothers who expose their children to avoid shame, but since this was

strictly against the teachings of the church, such women could be severely punished if found out. People would oftentimes think they heard the cries of these dead children in the mountains or in forests because they had died without being christened. To quiet these children, anyone might declare them christened on the spot by uttering some formula such as this one from Norway.

"Eg dýpper deg paa von anten Sigurd eller Jon."
("I christen you either Sigurd or Jon in the hope that this will quiet you."). Frequently such a child would call out the name of its mother, and a person having testified to hearing this was once enough to condemn a young girl. A legend about *utburdur* is behind the name *Johónnukinn* ('mountain slope of Johanna'). A girl by the name of Johanna exposed her child at that place, and the crying of a child was claimed to be heard there.

Also associated somewhat with *utburdur* is the legend behind *Kristinargrund* (grund—'grassy, flat land'). Here is believed to be the grave of a certain Kristin who, according to a legend, committed suicide after having borne a child by her brother, though whether or not she committed *utburdur* is not told. The legend says that a certain farmer once cut hay on Kristin's grave and afterwards fell asleep there. In his dreams a woman came to him and angrily told him that he would get no profit out of having cut grass over her grave. Shortly afterwards many of the farmer's sheep died from an unknown plague, and since then this land has never been hayed.

This fear of the power that the dead have over the living is also reflected in the name *Inguklettur* ('Inga's cliff'). Long ago a little girl named Inga wandered up into the mountains while tending sheep and fell from the cliff. Now this place is believed to be haunted by her spirit.

Skinndrattargja ('the ravine of the dragging on skins') has for its background a legend concerning *Thorgeirsboli*. According to folk tales *Thorgeirsboli* seems to be a bull, either owned by a certain *Thorgeir*, or else it is *Thorgeir* himself in a bull's shape, which often appeared in northern Iceland in the days just before the Black Death in the 14th century. It was regarded as an omen foreboding evil. This bull had a very strange hide because it hung down from both sides of its flanks and dragged on the ground. Two ghosts or spirits called *Mori* and *Skotta* each rode on this hide, being pulled all over the northern part of the country on it. Supposedly then, *Thorgeirsboli* happened at one time to come through this ravine, and that is how *Skinndrattargja* got its name. More probably, however, someone used to have the habit of dragging goods on skins, instead of on a sled, through the ravine, a custom which formerly was not uncommon, especially in winter. It is not unusual that the original meaning of a place name has been lost and that a new legend is created to explain it.

A curse is connected with *Hraunsvatn*, a lake near the farm *Hraun* ('stony stretch'), because of the poor fishing there. It is said that two sisters living on two different farms, each with its own lake, had a quarrel about

fishing rights. The sister who owned *Hraunsvatn* refused to let the other one fish there. Thus the latter placed a curse on *Hraunsvatn* that there would always be bad luck and loss connected with it.

There are several places in Oxndalur that are named after people mentioned in historical records or sagas.

The farm *Geirhildargardur* ('Geirhildur's farm') is named after a *Geirhildur* who is mentioned in *Landnamabok*, the Icelandic book of settlement. She was supposed to be versed in magic and evil, but no legends seem to remain concerning her.

In the upper part of Oxndalur is *Sörlahöll* ('the hill of Sörl') where it is claimed that Sörl the Strong is buried who was slain by *Thordr* the fighter in the Saga Age. That Sörl was killed by *Thordr* at *Lukasteinn* in Oxndalur is documented by *Thordar saga hreðu*, but recent excavations at *Sörlahöll* have failed to uncover any remnants of a grave. Thus this legend probably belongs only to tradition and not to historical fact.

Gvendarbrunnur ('Gudmundur's spring') is named after a well-known bishop by the name of *Gudmundur* who died in 1237. This spring was supposedly blessed by this bishop, for its waters are unusually sweet. The name *Gvendarbrunnur* occurs all over Iceland, and the legend behind it is probably related to similar legends in Norway about St. Olav who on his wanderings would stop to take a drink from a well. Afterwards these wells would contain unusually good water. Other historical place-names legends have to do with *Kaupmannspollur* ('merchant's pool'), *Vigholar* ('battle hills') and *Thrætutunga* ('disputed tongue of land').

Concerning the name, *Kaupmannspollur*, it is said that a certain merchant rode his horse into this pool accidentally and drowned.

Vigholar is traditionally the place where *Viga-Glumur* of *Viga-Glums saga* fought one of his enemies, and supposedly several warriors are buried there. Nowhere in the saga, however, is there any mention made of such a place.

Any place name which has the first element *thraeta* ('struggle, dispute') generally refers to a piece of land whose ownership has been questionable. Such a piece of land is *Thrætutunga*, a name which is quite common on the borderlands of farms in Iceland. No definite legend concerning any of the *Thrætutungur* in Oxndalur seems to have survived.

Legends often grew up around a place to explain some peculiarity of the landscape, the cause of which people did not understand. Such is the case with two farms, *Arga* and *Orre*, in Jæren, Norway. These two farms are located quite close together, but *Arga* has a great many stones on it while *Orre* has none. To explain this phenomenon, which we today know as probably being caused by a glacier, people in the old days did it this way.

There were once two giants, the legend says, each of whom lived on one of these farms. One day they wished to have a contest to see which one of them could get up earliest in the morning. The first one to get up was to start throwing stones over to the other one's farm where they were to remain lying, for the other giant was not allowed to throw them back. This is what happened,

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and since the giant from *Orre* won, this explains why there are stones at *Arga* and none at *Orre*.

The legend behind *Skessusteinn* ('troll woman's stone') in Oxndalur tries to explain a similar phenomenon as the one in Jæren, for this stone is situated alone out in the middle of a farmyard. According to *Viga-Glums saga* when *Viga-Glumur* lived at the farm called *Thverbrekka*, a troll woman wished to irk him and accordingly made a snide remark. When he did not pay any attention to her, she made this stone tumble down from the cliff above into the yard of the farm.

Another lone stone in the middle of a field is *Grylusteinn* ('giant woman's stone'). I have not been able to discover any legend concerning this stone, but undoubtedly a similar incident happened with it as happened with *Skessusteinn*.

The two words, *skessa* and *gryla*, are rather interesting because they exist almost exclusively in Iceland. A *skessa* is a troll woman of sorts, belonging to that race of supernatural beings which could be classified under the general heading of "troll". Trolls are normally large and rather malicious, though quite stupid and easily outwitted. Whereas the *huldufolk* were readily believed in, trolls belonged almost exclusively to the world of fantasy and bygone days. Legends and stories concerning *skessur* are very numerous in Iceland, but in Norway there are very few instances where a *skjessa* is mentioned. One of these instances in the Norwegian ballad, *Steinfinn Fefinnsson*, where she seems to be almost synonymous with a troll.

"Om saa tala gyvremori,
tok ho til aa mumre:
'Gak ut, Skjessa, skjer meg steik,
no tek eg til aa hungre!'"
("So spoke the troll mother, and she began to mumble, 'Go out, Skjessa, cut me a piece of meat, I'm getting hungry.'")

The word, *gryla*, exists only in Iceland and must have some connection with the verb, *gryla* ('to roar, bellow'). Stories about the *Gryla* are no longer current, but they are mentioned in older literature, and she appears to be a member of the troll family who steals children.

The following names all have for their first elements the names of people. *Thorkelsnes* ('Thorkell's ness') is named after a young boy called *Thorkell Pálsson* who in the previous century was a shepherd there. He had a falling-out with the farmer for whom he worked,

and the farmer beat him to death. In order to cover up the killing, it was reported that *Thorkell* had lost his way one night in the fog while tending sheep and had an accident because he was not watching where he was going.

Both *Thorgnyjarskeid* ('Thorgnyr's cliff wall') and *Thorgnyjarskal* ('Thorgnyr's depression') are named after a little girl called *Thorgnyr* who fell from this cliff and was later found dead in the depression below.

Skulaklettur ('Skuli's cliff') is named after a young boy called *Skuli* who went out and hung himself by his trousers suspenders on a pinnacle jutting out from this cliff.

Thorbjarnartunga ('Thorbjörn's tongue of land') is named after *Thorbjörn*, a stallboy in the old days who went up to the cow barn one snowy evening to milk. On his way back to the farm he lost his way. He was not found until quite a while later on this tongue of land, still holding both his milking pails.

There are several other places named in Oxndalur which have personal names for their first elements, but the legends behind them have undoubtedly been lost in the course of time. These are *Bjarnarkofi* ('Björn's hut'), *Ingveldarfönn* ('Ingveldur's snowfield'), *Jonsgerdi* ('Jon's fenced-in land'), *Randverskinn* ('Randver's slope'), *Skjaldarstadir* ('Skjöld's farm'), *Steinsstadir* ('Stein's farm') and *Thordargerdi* ('Thordur's fenced-in land').

Undoubtedly many more legends were once current in Oxndalur than these given. Due to the tendency, though, of the population to move to the cities, many of the old farmsteads are now deserted and their legends forgotten. What with such modern innovations as radio and television, new forms of entertainment are replacing the old pastime of story-telling. Thus if one were to travel to any part of Iceland a generation from now, there would probably be almost no one there who could remember any of the old legends first-hand. The same thing is happening all over Scandinavia, and thus it is very important to collect these legends before they disappear for ever. □

When you have dentures, you don't need to be reminded to brush your teeth after every meal.

If a woman telephones her husband at the office, it's a ten-to-one bet that something's wrong with the automobile.

